

# The Guilded Page

Museum Guild of the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library ... Newsletter ... page 1 ... May-June, 1997

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Museum Guild Members:

Isn't it amazing how the Museum just keeps getting better and more exciting? Many of us thought that we'd never see anything comparable to the dedication of October 21, 1995, with three presidents in attendance. But now we are looking forward to another spectacular event. The exhibition, "A Thousand Years of Czech Culture" has arrived at the Museum and is being readied for its opening on May 24th. Not only is this a tremendous honor for our Museum, but for our city and state as well.

This exhibition brings unlimited opportunities for all of us Guild members to be of service to the Museum. Please offer all of the assistance that you possibly can to the Museum while this exhibition is here from May 24th through December 31st.

The publications committee will be bringing you a special feature over the next five issues of *The Guilded Page*. The Guild's five founders will be profiled, one in each issue. The Guild was founded in May 1994 by Mae Novotny, Patty Hikiji, Evelyn Lamparek, Sylvia Rohlena and Marjorie Stone. We owe a great debt of gratitude to our founders for the foresight and vision they displayed in forming the Guild. We will all be enriched by knowing more about them.

Thank you all for your wonderful cooperation and participation in the Guild, and a special thank you for all of your assistance to the Museum.

I hope to see you at our May 3rd meeting at Hamilton Business College.

Sincerely,  
Marilyn R. Tucker

P.S. Please mark your calendar for the June 9th meeting which will be held at the Museum.



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 3rd  
Museum Guild Meeting  
Student Break Room  
Hamilton College  
1924 D Street SW  
9:30 - 11:00 am

May 16th & 19th  
Ethnic crafts classes  
Sidonka Wadina, instructor  
WFLA Heritage Hall  
Call the Museum (362-8500) for registration information

May 11th & 18th  
Houby Days Festival  
Czech Village  
May 17 - 11:00 am Enter mushrooms  
2:00 pm Judging  
May 18 - 10:00 am 5K run  
1:00 pm Parade

May 24th opening of  
A Thousand Years of Czech Culture exhibit  
National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library  
open through December 31st

May 24th & 25th  
Cedar Rapids Ethnic Fest '97  
Hawkeye Downs  
Saturday - 12 noon to 10:00 pm  
Sunday - 12 noon to 8:00 pm

May 26th  
Memorial Day Observation  
Czech National Cemetery  
11:30 am

June 9th, July 14th, August 11th  
Museum Guild Meeting  
National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library  
6:30 pm

August 12th  
Annual Czech Heritage Picnic  
ZCJB Park  
6:30 pm

# OUR FOUNDING FIVE

## MAE NOVOTNY

*This is the first in a series of articles profiling the Guild's five founders and original charter members, whose time and effort made the Museum Guild of the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library a reality, and to whom we owe a deep debt of gratitude.*

Mae Novotny was dedicated to all things Czech, and a retrospective look at her life reveals how deeply involved she was with her heritage. Having spent her entire life in and around the Cedar Rapids area, our whole community has been greatly enriched and enhanced by her devotion to the Czech culture.

### A Personal History

Born on May 24, 1922 into a family with strong Czech roots, Mae Olga Faltis was raised near Fairfax, Iowa, along with her two siblings. Her parents exhibited a profound love for and devotion to their culture, which was apparent to Mae early on. As a result of this environment, she grew up with a deeply ingrained sense of pride and an intense awareness of her heritage.

*“She saw both of her projects progressing and I know that she would be so proud of the work of the Guild and would tell you so.”*

— Frank W. Novotny,  
Mae's co-worker and  
partner for forty-eight years

As a child, Mae initially attended country school, followed by study at Fairfax Junior High School. After completing her education by graduating from Wilson High School in 1939, she accepted a position as bookkeeper for Polehna's Meat Market in Cedar Rapids.

Mae met her future husband, Frank W. Novotny, at a picnic; they fell in love and were married in 1946 at Hus Memorial Presbyterian Church in Cedar Rapids. She subsequently ended her employment at Polehna's Market



*Mae Novotny, a founding member of the Guild, and one of five original charter members*

in order to become a wife and mother. In the early years of their marriage, their lives were filled with the responsibilities of raising their two sons, Russell and Roger, as well as working their farm south of Cedar Rapids (where Frank still resides). In addition to farming, they maintained a stall in the open-air City Market on F Avenue in the northwest sector of town. In 1966, Frank and Mae made the decision to rent out their land, having established their own business — Novotny's Flowers — several years earlier. After managing their flower shop together for twenty-three years, they retired from business in 1980.

### A Deep Devotion to Czech Culture

It was at this milepost in her life that Mae's steadfast dedication to her heritage came to the forefront. She and her husband both assumed visible roles in the preservation of their Czech heritage. As partners in work and life, Mae and Frank also worked together with the Czech Heritage Foundation. Mae functioned as a member of the Board of Directors, with Frank serving as its president for eleven years. She was a deeply dedicated booster of the Foundation. During this time Mae also became involved with the Czech Fine Arts Foundation,<sup>1</sup> serving as a member of its Board of Directors as well.

### Establishing the Guild

As their work within these organizations progressed, Mae gradually became involved in volunteering at the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library as it evolved through

<sup>1</sup> The Czech Fine Arts Foundation, a branch of the Czech Heritage Foundation, evolved into the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library of today.

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## *Mae Novotny, continued*

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several levels of development, extending her volunteer service in an ever-widening circle. At the time of the Guild's inception and initial organization in the early months of 1994, she had already been involved in a volunteer capacity at the Museum's office for several years, assisting Patty Hikiji with bookwork and other tasks. As a founder and charter member of the Guild, Mae functioned in the office of secretary until illness precluded her from continuing in the spring of 1994. Until her passing later that year on September 1st, she continued her inexhaustible support of — and devotion to — all things Czech.

*Mae grew up with a deeply ingrained sense of pride and an intense awareness of her heritage.*

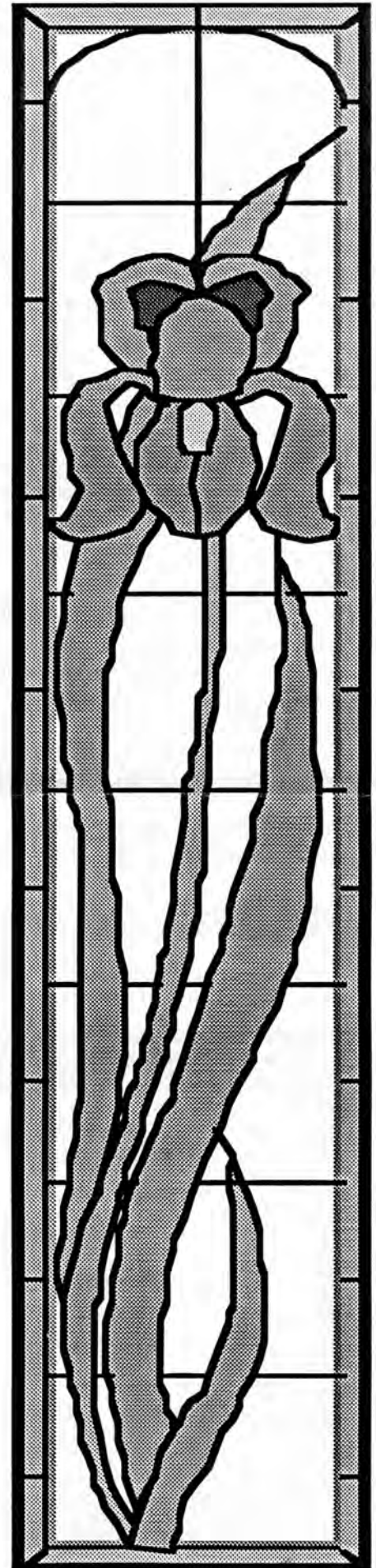
### **Quilting and Kolaches**

Mae enjoyed a rich diversity of activities throughout her life. Crafting was her special hobby — she loved to embroider and painstakingly quilt intricate pillow tops. She expressed her love of her culture by baking kolaches and all manner of delicious Czech pastries, often sharing them with neighbors and friends. One of Mae's special projects concerned the Girls' 4-H Program. "She simply loved working with people," her husband recalls fondly. This was evidenced by her involvement with the program for thirty-five years, even though she and her husband had no daughters of their own.

### **A Gift for Giving**

Whether volunteering her time and talent, promoting issues close to her heart or raising her children, Mae Novotny devoted her entire life to giving. It was an integral part of her nature and she had a true gift for it, especially where her heritage was concerned. Frank, Mae's co-worker and partner for forty-eight years, speaks of her with deep love and pride: "She was a dedicated booster of our Czech heritage and a promoter of the Museum and Guild," he relates. "She saw both of her projects progressing and I know that she would be so proud of the work of the Guild and she would tell you so." He charges us with both a responsibility and a heartfelt request: "Keep up the good work . . . and sometimes think of the charter members who made the Guild possible." 

— Cynthia Tucker Shaffer



## Program Notes

In **March**, Pauline Jasa shared with Guild members the many uses for goose feathers. Pauline demonstrated how peroutky (feather basters) are made, and showed pictures of a typical feather stripping party. Reminiscences of a custom long abandoned were shared and there was talk of resurrecting a small part of this tradition peroutky making workshops?

**April's** program was a joint effort conducted by three members of the Guild. Lenora Watson, Rose Kopecky, and Olga Sedenka. Lenora's items included a decorative hand embroidered apron, Rose brought a lace collar with intricate gold crochet to share, and Olga displayed a table cloth featuring padded satin cutwork. All items were exquisite examples of hand work.

Coming up in **May**, Holly Upah and James Horak (1995 Czech Heritage Foundation Prince and Princess, will share their royal adventures of 1995, including participating in the dedication of Masaryk Park and the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library.

In **June**, Sheryl Nejd, Gift Shop Manager at the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library will take us on a special inside tour of the Museum Store and will visit with us about the various sale items, including some exciting new pieces.

by ... *John Rocarek*  
Program Committee



## MAKOVEC

Recipe from ... *Irma Modracek*

Cream together:

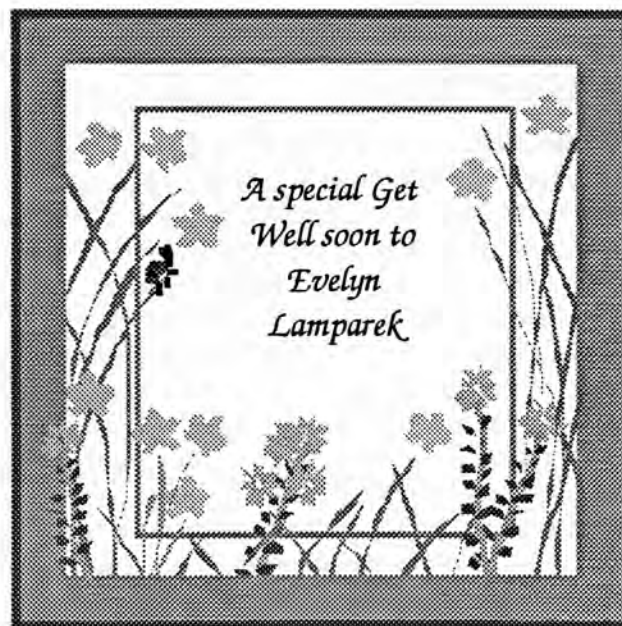
- 3/4 cup butter
- 1 3/4 cup sugar
- 4 eggs - add one at a time
- 1 cup mashed potatoes
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1/2 pound poppy seed (ground)

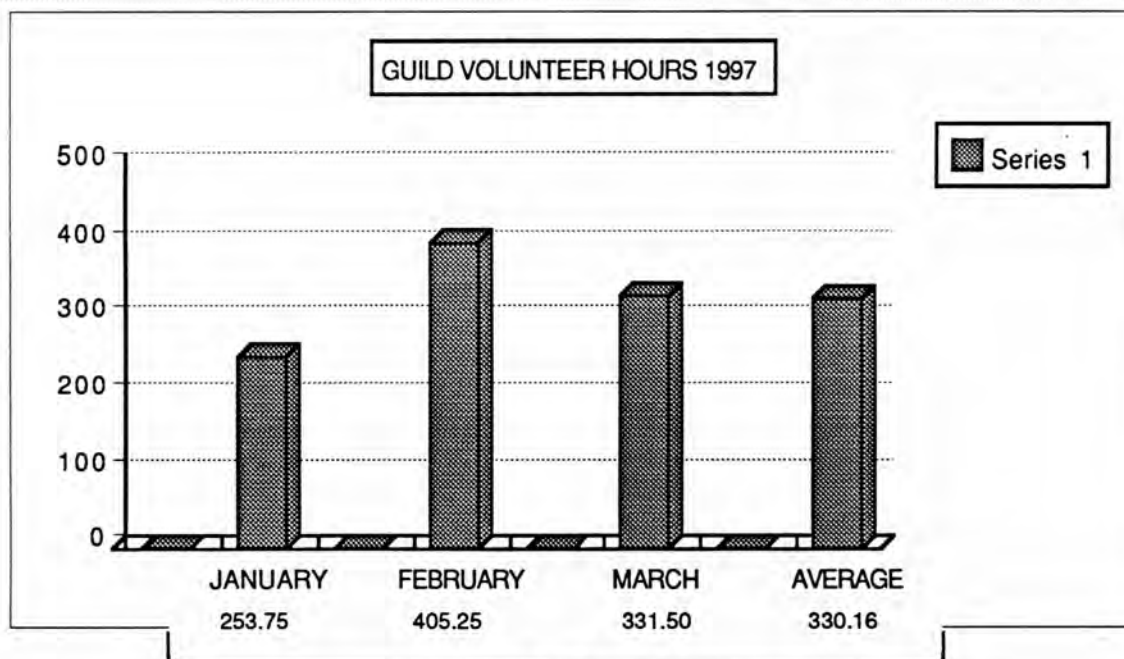
Sift together:

- 1 teas. cinnamon
- 1/4 teas. salt
- 1 cup flour
- 2 teas. baking powder

- 1 teas. vanilla
- 1 cup ground nuts
- Bake 350 degrees oven for 1 1/4 hours

**Irma's notes:** "This recipe is from Czechoslovakia, and there were no directions with it. Over the years I practised and this is what I found: Beating in the eggs one at a time produces more volume than putting them in the blender along with the milk and potatoes. Also, I've tried dried mashed potatoes and also left over mashed potatoes from a meal. Neither works as well as boiling small potatoes with the skins on, peeling, mashing with a fork and putting in the blender along with the milk to the 1 1/2 cup mark. I also add the vanilla at this time. Bake it in a well greased/floured bundt pan. Sometimes it may be done before the 1 1/4 hour is up. I generally leave it in the full 1 1/4 hour because I want to be sure it is through baking. Ovens can differ so use your own judgment."





### LIBRARY JOB LIST

**Register acquisitions** - includes completing Certificates of Gift, writing Thank You letters, logging gift in record book, and filing returned Certificates of Gift.

Skills required - word processing, letter writing, attention to detail

**Bookplates** - includes affixing bookplates in books donated to the Library in recent years. This job might be a fun one to do in a group.

Skills required - nice handwriting

**Sorting & Shelving books** - includes sorting books into pre-defined categories and placing them in the appropriate shelf location.

Skills required - working knowledge of Czech, ability to work on your feet, attention to detail

**Cleaning & Reorganizing Library section of Annex (AKA the Old Building)** - includes removing boxed books from shelves, cleaning & lining shelves, unboxing, sorting, & reshelving books.

Skills required - ability to work on feet, light lifting, working knowledge of Czech for sorting, attention to detail

Martha Wilding, Librarian

#### National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library Library Wish List April 23, 1997

1. Book Truck
2. Book Ends (oversized with cork bottom)
3. Clipping & Pamphlet File:
  - 1 - 4 drawer, legal size file cabinet
  - 100 archival pocket folders
  - 10 reams acid-free paper
  - 1000 file folder labels
  - 1 gallon pH neutral archival paste





*National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library*

30 Sixteenth Avenue S.W. - Cedar Rapids, Iowa USA 52404-5904

319 362-8500 - Fax 319 363-2209

April 12, 1997

Dear Museum Volunteer:

In conjunction with the exhibition, "A Thousand Years of Czech Culture," opening at the Museum on May 24th, we are planning an Orientation & Training Workshop for all **current** and potential volunteers. Tours of the new exhibit will be self-guided but we will still need gallery attendants for the Exhibit Hall, docents for the Immigrant Home, and teacher tour-guides and Village tour-guides to work with our school and youth groups. We will also need to expand our information receptionist and gift store sales clerk force.

The workshops are scheduled for April 21 and May 12 in the Museum's WFLA Heritage Hall as follows:

April 21	May 12
9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	1:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.
or	or
6:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.	6:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Choose **one** session to attend and **call** (319) 362-8500 to register your choice.

To update our Volunteer File, would you please fill out the enclosed **Interest Form** and return it to the Volunteer Coordinator.

Thank you for your continued participation.

Sincerely yours,

*Patty*

Patricia A. Hikiji  
Volunteer Coordinator

*Dear Museum Guild Members,  
I would like to express my  
gratitude to the Guild for sup-  
plying the coffee and pastries  
for our "Easter Traditions" Saturday.  
The refreshments were appre-  
ciated by our arts and crafts  
demonstrators who put in two  
full days and talked to over  
650 visitors!!  
Děkuji vám mnohokrát!  
Sincerely,  
Patty Hikiji*

National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library  
Volunteer Interest Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I am a:  Student (Grade: \_\_\_\_\_)  Homemaker  Employed Adult  Retired Adult

If employed, employer \_\_\_\_\_

Birthday \_\_\_\_\_ Days & Hours Available to work: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you wish to volunteer on a:  Regular Basis?  On-call Basis?

Work/Volunteer Experience: \_\_\_\_\_

**Volunteer Interest Areas (Please check all areas that apply.)**

Museum Docent/Attendant  Teacher Tour Guide  Village Tour Guide  Gift Store Clerk

Library/Collections Work:  Library Attendant  Materials Processing Assistant

Physical Tasks  Translator (Circle Language: Czech Slovak)

Oral History Interviewer

Office Work:  Answer Telephone  Clerical Tasks  Computer Data Entry

Computer Programming  Bulk Mailings  Fundraising

Newsletter Layout/Editing

Building & Grounds Work:  Maintenance  Housekeeping  Grounds Upkeep

Program Work:  Planning  Storytelling  Performer, Talent: \_\_\_\_\_

Crafts (Circle: Demonstrator, Instructor) Craft: \_\_\_\_\_

Special Events:  Planning  Decorating  Serving  Ushering  Tickets/Cashier

Refreshments (Circle: Prepare, Setup, Cleanup)

Other Supportive Skills:  Baking  Sewing  Peroutky  Carpentry  Photography

Videography  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Return completed form to the Museum Office. Thank You for Your Interest!**

In the March issue of "The Guilded Page" we inadvertently ran a picture of a Czech Girl With Goose Logo without giving proper credit. We would like to thank Czech Feather & Down Company for the use of their logo.

*The Guilded Page*  
Terri L. Spahn, Editor



*Address correction requested*